AGRICULTURAL PRODUCTION

39. The intensified efforts made this year to increase agricultural production will be continued next year also. The substantial increase in the outlays for agricultural production both this year and in the coming year highlights the importance given to this sector. Since the cultivable area at our command is limited, increase in agricultural production can be brought about only by intensification of cultivation. It is a good augury that our cultivators are now deeply conscious of their responsibility. They are utilising fertilisers in an increasing measure, and taking to scientific agricultural practices. The following table shows the quantity of chemical fertilisers used:—

(*in tons*)

Year	*Nitrogenous*	*Phosphatic*	*Pottassic*	*Total*
1960-61	26150	28906	400	55456
1961-62	30825	52044	4424	87293
1962-63	40820	55562	15644	112026
1963-64 (Estimate)	60000	65625	20000	145625

Thus over a period of two years the consumption of chemical fertilisers has almost doubled itself and over the past three years it has nearly trebled. The scheme for fertiliser trials on cultivators' fields is now in force in six districts and next year it is proposed to extend it to the remaining districts also. The programmes for production of urban compost and green manuring are also progressing satisfactorily. These are sure indications of the rapid strides we are taking in the agricultural field.

40. The Third Plan target for the establishment of paddy seed farms covering 865 acres will be achieved by the end of this year. 84 seed stores were constructed in the first two years of the Plan. 138 seed stores are expected to be constructed this year and the target for 1964-65 is to establish an equal number. There are at present 17 Departmental and 30 Block Nurseries capable of producing 8 lakhs of quality coconut seedlings. Annually about 12 lakhs of arecanut seedlings are distributed from the various nurseries in the State. The six Departmental pepper nurseries produce about 6 lakh rooted cuttings annually. Improved seeds and seedlings are thus easily within the reach of our agriculturists.

41. Plant protection operations are being steadily expanded. An area of 7·20 lakh acres is expected to be covered in 1963-64. The target fixed for the year 1964-65 is 8·20 lakh acres. 180 lakhs of coconut trees will be sprayed this year as against 129 lakhs of trees sprayed in 1962-63. The same target is fixed for next year also.

42. During 1964-65 two more Blocks in the Alleppey District will be brought under the Package Programme, thereby bringing the entire district under the scheme. The scheme for intensive cultivation of rice is being implemented in 19 Blocks outside the Package Districts. Next year it is proposed to extend the scheme to three more Blocks.

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